THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, the 9th July 1952.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at four of the clock, Mr. Chairman (THE HON. DR. P. V. CHERIAN) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

House-rent allowance to the menial staff in the Government Estate.

* 28 Q.—SRI K. SURYANARAYANA : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(a) whether separate house-rent allowance is paid to the menial staff employed by the Public Works Department in the Government House Estate ; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE HON. SRI N. RANGA REDDI :—" (a) The conservancy establishment and the gardeners employed in the Government Estate, Mount Road, who have not been provided with houses, are drawing a house-rent allowance at Rs. 7 per mensem each. The mazdoors and sweepers employed for the maintenance of the Rajaji Hall have not been sanctioned a separate house-rent allowance ; they are paid a consolidated salary at market rates for similar labour.

" (b) As the mazdoors and sweepers employed for the maintenance of the Rajaji Hall have been employed on a fixed salary of Rs. 33 per mensem inclusive of all allowances, no separate house-rent allowance has been sanctioned to them."

Supply of muskets, revolvers and handcuffs to the Prohibition staff.

* 29 Q.—SRI S. B. ADITYAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Prohibition be pleased to state—

(a) whether muskets were purchased and supplied to the Prohibition staff and if so, (i) the number of such muskets and (ii) the cost of such muskets during the years 1949–50, 1950–51 and 1951–52 ;

(b) whether revolvers were purchased and supplied to the Prohibition staff and if so, (i) the number of such revolvers and (ii) the cost of such revolvers during the above period ;

(c) whether handcuffs were purchased and supplied to the Prohibition staff and if so, the number of such handcuffs during the same period ; and

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(*d*) whether the muskets, revolvers and handcuffs were put to effective use in enforcing Prohibition?

THE HON. SRI V. C. PALANISWAMI GOUNDER:—" (*a*) to (*d*) It is not in the public interest to give a detailed answer to this question as the law-breakers will take advantage of the information."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Although detailed information need not be given in respect of the muskets, revolvers and handcuffs, may I know under what circumstances and for what reasons it became necessary to purchase these terrible weapons, about which details could not be given?"

THE HON. SRI V. C. PALANISWAMI GOUNDER :—" In public interests, I am unable to disclose the reasons."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know at least whether it is a fact that public support and co-operation are not forthcoming for Prohibition as in the earlier days?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The co-operation is not forthcoming from the criminals concerned."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know whether the Government have given up persuasion and propaganda as useful weapons in the policy of Prohibition; have they been given up in favour of muskets, revolvers and handcuffs, etc.?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The Government have not given up persuasion nor are they intending to give it up; in fact, they appeal to all sections in the House to co-operate in the matter of persuasion. But the question is whether those who have broken the law could be persuaded to go to the Police lock-up without these things. It is different from persuasion in respect of abstinence; so far as the crime is concerned, it is a different branch and a different psychology altogether."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know, Sir, how much money has been spent from public funds for the purchase of muskets, revolvers and handcuffs?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Sir, that should be addressed to the Finance Department and fresh notice in respect of it should be given; the Prohibition Minister could not be asked on a question of finance."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know, Sir, whether the Government have under consideration any proposal to appoint a Committee to enquire and find out the volume of public support now forthcoming, whether it is necessary to purchase and keep these weapons and to review the Prohibition policy in general?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The Government will await the end of the Budget debate when there

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will be opportunities to understand the opinion reflected in the House and then everything that has to be done will be done."

SRI C. RAJESWARA RAO :—" The Hon. the Chief Minister has said that it is not the public support that is not forthcoming but it is the co-operation of the criminals or those that disobey the law that is not forthcoming. May I know, Sir, if the Hon. the Chief Minister has received recent information which I am going to read here. It is from the Prohibition Officer, Krishna, and he said he would send this information to the Government. He gave this report to the Prohibition Advisory Committee and it is a written report and I will read out an extract—

" 'During the quarter, 193 cases were acquitted; all these cases relate to the Masulipatam circle because the muttadars turned hostile and consequently, the cases were acquitted. The village officers have deliberately turned hostile in several cases and their conduct has been brought to the notice of the Collectors. These acquittals are due to want of public co-operation.'

May I know if the Government have received this information from the Prohibition Officer of Krishna and whether they will take action?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Generally reports given to Advisory Councils are not copied out and sent to the Government but I take it for granted as the hon. Member has read out from the report. But the language used by the Prohibition Officer is subject to the correct interpretation in the context of what he means by public support. It is that the village officers and the witnesses did not support the prosecution. Steps are taken to meet such cases and such difficulties. It does not mean that the public support for the policy of Prohibition is not forthcoming whenever a crime is committed. I have seen want of public support in forgery and murder cases if public support means the support of the village officers and the witnesses concerned."

SRI C. RAJESWARA RAO :—" I am sorry the Hon. the Chief Minister wants to give this kind of interpretation. The Prohibition Officer has clearly stated in the Report that distillation is going on in the open before everyday's eyes and nobody has reported to the Government. May I know if the Government are ready to get the information from the Prohibition Officer concerned?"

THE HON. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The Government cannot afford to yield to such lapses on the part of people here and there. There will always be such lapses. Even robbery is an open form of theft but we do not yield and we have to fight against criminal tendencies. Of course, if the entire population refused to help, we will throw up our hand and for that we have to wait."

SRI V. GURUNANDAN RAO :—" May I know, Sir, if the Prohibition staff is also given training in the use of firearms before they are entrusted with those weapons?"

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THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Weapons are not issued unless their proper use on the part of the staff is ensured."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" What happened to the proposal to appoint propagandists? I think the Hon. the Chief Minister is aware of the fact that a Committee was appointed to recruit propagandists and that Committee consisted of the Secretary of the Tamilnad Congress Committee and two others and they recommended names for appointment as propagandists for Prohibition. May I know what happened to the proposal and were any persons recruited as propagandists as a result of the labours of that Committee? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" In fact, for any such question, I should ask for notice but the hon. Member must have more knowledge of these things than I have because he was with the Government at that time."

SRI B. V. SUBRAHMANYAM :—" Does the Hon. the Chief Minister mean to suggest that unless the Prohibition staff is armed with muskets, revolvers and handcuffs, they are not able to face the particular kind of criminals that are involved in Prohibition offences? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I am surprised at the hon. Member's question; this is not a new thing at all. From time immemorial, policemen who have to deal with crimes are armed with weapons of this kind and also in raids by the Abkari people, from time immemorial, they have been armed because there is great risk in these kinds of cases and arms are necessary against anti-social elements during all periods, whether before or after Prohibition."

SRI B. V. SUBRAHMANYAM :—" May I ask, Sir, whether the Police staff were having muskets and revolvers before or are they having them for the first time now? I mean the Prohibition staff and also the policemen in charge of Prohibition work? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" It takes some time for the criminals to arm themselves. In the beginning, when the Prohibition Act was passed, they had no arms but by and by, they have been encouraged to gather together and they have weapons and these things grow in a vicious circle."

Bill to amend the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act.

* 30 Q.—MRS. M. N. CLUBWALA : Will the Hon. the Minister for Law be pleased to state whether the recommendations and amendments of the Special Committee, appointed by the Government for amending the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act, have been considered and, if so, when an amending Bill will be ready for presentation?

THE HON. SRI K. P. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR :—" The recommendations and the amendments suggested by the Committee are under consideration."